

BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING

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Clinical Learning Experiences Nursing Students

The Board of Registered Nursing is statutorily authorized to interpret, implement, and enforce the Nursing Practice Act and its regulations. Business and Professions Code § Section 2729 statutorily authorizes that nursing services may be rendered by a student nurse when these services are incidental to the course of study when the nursing student is enrolled in a board-approved nursing program.

BRN Position: Nursing faculty of a California board approved nursing program is authorized by the above law to initiate and continue to allow nursing student's clinical education functions including administration of medication. The role of the nursing faculty is to provide direct and indirect supervision of nursing students in all clinical activities. The Board of Registered Nursing has relied on Business and Professions Code Section § 2729 and does not consider nursing students as unlicensed assistive personnel for the purpose of clinical nursing education.

Faculty determines the amount of supervision to provide to any individual nursing student. When determining the appropriate level of supervision, faculty must consider the severity and stability of the assigned patient, the patient's condition, as well as the student's competency and ability to adapt to changing situations in the clinical setting. Faculty should also consider the types of treatments, procedures, and medications to be administered to the patient. When engaged in clinical learning experiences the nursing student is under the supervision of the clinical faculty and the RN in the facility. Both the clinical faculty and the RN in the clinical facility are responsible for the quality of care delivered by students under their supervision.

Expanding clinical technology such as electronic medical records, medication distribution systems, and bar-coding electronic medication administration processes require faculty and nursing students to attend training sessions allowing them to gain the knowledge necessary to use these systems. The board expects nursing faculty to ensure that the learning experiences chosen provide the student with the opportunity to develop those skills necessary to ensure that they will become safe, competent practitioners. Since these technologies are here today and will be a future part of healthcare delivery, faculty and nursing students must have hands on experiences with these systems while learning to provide registered nursing care to patients.

If questions arise regarding RN practice or nursing student authority to perform registered nursing functions while enrolled in a California approved nursing program, do not hesitate contacting the Board of Registered Nursing at www.rn.ca.gov.